

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1-5, 14 and 20 have been canceled, claims 6-10, 13 and 15 have been amended, and claims 21-27 have been added. Claim 17 was previously canceled.

Claims 6-13, 15, 16, 18, 19 and 21-27 are currently pending in the application. Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

In regard to Rejection of Claims 1-6, 9, 10, 14 and 20 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(c)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 9, 10 and 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(c) as being anticipated by Ohyama, U.S. Patent No. 6,547,024. The Applicant believes this rejection has been addressed and overcome by the present amendment.

In response to the Examiner's remarks, the Applicant has canceled claims 1-5, 14 and 20, and as such the rejection is moot with respect thereto.

In response to the Examiner's remarks, the Applicant has amended claims 6, 9 and 10 to depend from claim 11, which the Examiner has indicated to be allowable. As such, the Examiner's rejection of claims 6, 9 and 10 is believed to be addressed and overcome and should be withdrawn.

In regard to Rejection of Claims 7 and 8 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohyama. The Examiner has also rejected claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohyama in view of Gagnon, U.S. Patent No. 6,626,260. The Applicant believes these rejections have been addressed and overcome by the present amendment.

In response to the Examiner's remarks, the Applicant has amended claims 7 and 8 to depend from claim 11, which the Examiner has indicated to be allowable. As such, the Examiner's rejection is believed to be addressed and overcome and should be withdrawn.

In regard to Rejection of Claims 15 and 16 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohyama in view of Sakakibara, U.S. Patent No. 5,052,990.

In response to the Examiner's remarks, the Applicant has amended claims 15 and 16 to depend from claim 18, which the Examiner has indicated to be allowable. As such, the Examiner's rejection is believed to be addressed and overcome and should be withdrawn.

Additional Comments

By the present amendment, claim 13 has been amended to depend from claim 11 and not from claim 1. This amendment was made to correct a typographical error. The Applicant notes that the Examiner has examined claim 13 as if it depended from claim 11, with which this amendment is consistent.

By the present amendment, claims 21-27 have been added. These claims are believed to be allowable as they all depend from either claim 18 or 19, both of which the Examiner has previously indicated to be allowable.

In view of the above remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that all of the currently pending claims are allowable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in a better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

At the time of filing of the present response, the Office was authorized to charge the fees believed to be necessary to a credit card. In case of any under- or over-payment or should any additional fee be otherwise necessary, the Office is hereby authorized to credit or debit (as the case may be) Deposit Account number 502977.

Respectfully submitted,

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